

# TAKE

9min 19 sec April 2019 AUSTRALIA



*'I am the house and the house is me. I dance the history of the house and she reveals my history.'* Victoria Hunt

## Press Kit

As If Productions

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## TAKE (te reo Maori: issue, promise, challenge)

### One line synopsis

Weaving contemporary dance and archival materials with mana wahine (female knowledge), TAKE retells the story of the removal of the carved ancestral Maori meetinghouse, Hinemihi o te Ao Tawhito, from Aotearoa, New Zealand to England in 1892.

### One paragraph synopsis

TAKE weaves mana wahine (female knowledge), dance and archival materials to retell the story of the removal of the ancestral carved Maori meetinghouse, Hinemihi o te Ao Tawhito, from Aotearoa, New Zealand to England in 1892. It is a call to return Hinemihi, embodied by Australian born Maori dancer and performance artist, Victoria Hunt. Set in the liminal spaces between history and emotion TAKE unfolds a story of origins, whakapapa, traumatic events and colonial violence.



Hinemihi o te Ao Tawhito Meeting House, Aotearoa, New Zealand c 1886

A film by Victoria Hunt in collaboration with Margot Nash

**Cast and Crew:**

**Director, Dancer & Choreographer:** Victoria Hunt

**Producer & Editor:** Margot Nash

**Camera:** Boris Bagattini, Sam James, Martin Fox

**Sound Composition:** James Brown, Wade Marynowski

**Additional sound design & Sound mix:** James Brown

**Te Taonga Puoro:** Hirini Melbourne & Richard Nunns

**Voice:** Aroha Yates-Smith

**Digital Special Effects:** Boris Bagattini, Mat McCosker

**Lighting:** Clytie Smith, Fausto Brusamolino

**Online and colour grade:** Michael Gissing, Digital City Studios



Hinemihi Guides c1886

Completion date

Genres

Shooting Format

Running Time

Speed

Resolution

Aspect Ratio

April 2019

Documentary, Dance,  
Experimental, History

HD, DV

9 minutes 19 seconds

25fps

1920 x 1080

16:9



## Awards:

**2020** Nominated: Best Achievement in Indigenous Filmmaking, St Kilda Film Festival, Australia

**2019** Special Mention Sydney Film Festival - Australian Short Screenplay, Australia  
Mana Whenua Short Non-Fiction by a Maori Director, Wairoa Maori Film Festival, Aotearoa, New Zealand

## Film Festivals and Screenings:

### 2021

31<sup>st</sup> International First Peoples Festival (in competition) Montreal, Canada;  
Melbourne Women in Film, Australia  
Waitangi Day Wellington, Aotearoa, New Zealand

### 2020

Places of Memory 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Indigenous Film & Art Festival Denver Colorado USA;  
Pacific People's Partnership One Wave Gathering, Canada  
2020 Vision South East Dance UK  
Maoriland, Wellington Aotearoa, New Zealand  
Asinabka Indigneous Festival, Canada  
Spirit Glitch 3<sup>rd</sup> Expanded Corporality Int Short Film Festival FICCE Argentina  
Matariki Festival, Aotearoa New Zealand  
St Kilda Film Festival, Australia  
22<sup>nd</sup> NIRIN Biennale of Sydney - 15 Screens Australia  
50<sup>th</sup> Tampere Film Festival, First Nations Program, Finland

### 2019

ImagineNATIVE Media Arts Festival, Toronto Canada  
Antenna Documentary Film Festival, Australia  
Biennale of Body, Arts, Image & Movement, Madrid, Spain  
BIAFF Batumi International Art House Film Festival, Georgia  
Rotorua Indigenous Film Festival, Aotearoa New Zealand  
New Zealand International Film Festival: Auck & Wellington, Aotearoa, New Zealand;  
Sydney International Film Festival, Australia  
Wairoa Maori Film Festival, Aotearoa, New Zealand

*Supported by: The Digital Mentorship Program, Sydney Opera House and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Technology Sydney*



Victoria inside Hinemihi o te Ao Tawhito Meeting House, Surrey, England 2015 ph: James Brown



Victoria inside Hinemihi o te Ao Tawhito Meeting House, Surrey, England 2015 ph: Manuel Vason

## Director's Statement

I was born and raised in Australia, on Yugambah Country, Surfers Paradise Qld. I live and work on the unceded land of the Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation, Sydney. My ancestral affiliations are to Te Arawa, Rongowhaakata, Kahungunu Maori, English, Irish and Finnish.

My journey back to Aotearoa, New Zealand to reconnect with Tarawera and my whanau (family) was accelerated after my father's death-in-custody in a Bundaberg watch-house in 1991. Institutional racism within prison settings is ongoing, as is the collection, commodification and ownership of secret sacred objects. I recall my uncle crying as we stood by the empty grove where our ancestral meeting house, Hinemihi once stood. He talked about the eruption of Mt Tarawera in 1886 and how Hinemihi was later 'sold' and taken to England. Like me, he said, she was living far from her ancestral lands. I have been dancing the story of Hinemihi ever since.

Making TAKE was an experiment in cinematic storytelling using existing footage from my dance works combined with still photographs and newspaper stories from the archives. It came about through the Digital Mentorship Program of the Sydney Opera House, working with Margot Nash as mentor and then collaborating with her as editor and producer.

My aim as a dancer, director, educator and activist is to reinstate the power of Indigenous creativity through unravelling the complexities Indigenous people face within the struggle for recognition, reclamation and remembrance. Central to this is the honouring of whakapapa (genealogy) and the revitalization of mana wahine (feminine knowledge). My work is a gradual binding of intimate collaboration between artists, elders and community.

Victoria Hunt



## Short Biographies

### VICTORIA HUNT - Director, Dancer, Choreographer



Victoria Hunt works across diverse forms as a dancer, choreographer, director, photographer and filmmaker. Her work is philosophically liminal, inter-cultural and reinstates the power of Indigenous creativity within the politics of Rematriation - inserting the body into frameworks of power, for future ancestors. A founding member of Tess De Quincey's Body Weather dance company and co-curator of The Weather Exchange, she was one of six artists featured in the 1st edition of Biennale of the Arts of the Body, Image and Movement in Madrid. She is a Rex Cramphorn Theatre Fellow alongside numerous awards. Her short film TAKE, in collaboration with Margot Nash, has screened extensively across six continents.

### MARGOT NASH - Producer, Editor



Margot Nash is a New Zealand born Australian based filmmaker. Her directing credits include the award winning feature dramas *Vacant Possession* (1994) and *Call Me Mum* (2005), the experimental short *Shadow Panic* (1989) and the feature documentary *The Silences* (2015), which she edited. She was a co filmmaker and editor on *We Aim To Please* (1976) and *For Love Or Money* (1983). Margot has worked as a consultant and mentor for Australian Indigenous filmmakers as well as working in the Pacific running documentary workshops for Pacific Island women television producers. In 2016 she won an Australian Writers' Guild AWGIE Award for the screenplay of *The Silences*. She is a Visiting Fellow in Communications at the University of Technology Sydney.